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[BEGIN AUDIO]

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The oral history interview was conducted on June 18, 1994 at 8:30 in the morning by the National Park Service, American Memorial Park in cooperation with Mariana's Cable Vision. The subject is Mr. David McCarthy, veteran of the Mariana's Campaign. The interviewer is Daniel Martinez, historian for the National Park Service, USS Arizona Memorial. Good morning. [TECHNICAL]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** His daddy, he died but he was on the destroyer. No, he didn't get a scratch. That's right. It went by him. He had a story to tell me. He didn't get a scratch.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Was he in the Pacific or the Atlantic?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** He was in the Atlantic. I was the only one out here. I was the only one.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** But they all survived the war.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes sir. Every one of us, not a scratch. Well maybe scratches but not here. You can't see them.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How many of the family members are still alive?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I have two brothers. Tom and Paul. Charlie died in 1970.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** I see. What town did you grow up in?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Mainly Cincinnati and a little town, not in the city of Cincinnati.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** A suburb?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, about 15 miles out.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was it called?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Deer Park.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Deer Park. You went to grammar school there?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, grammar school, high school there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Was that a public school?

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, public school.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Didn't make it to Catholic school?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That was right down the street. They were my buddies. Eventually, I got to know them all. That's another story.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Okay. Why did you join the military?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Why? Patriotism.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The war starts. Where were you on Pearl Harbor Day?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Pearl Harbor Day, I'm still a young lad, gee I think I was 17, maybe 17 ½. In those days you could still buy a beer. They didn't care. Pearl Harbor Day, I was at the Bluebell Tavern up in Blue Ash Ohio in a back room. We're shooting nickel and dime craps. The word comes out somebody said hey, Pearl Harbor was hit. We're all saying where's Pearl Harbor. You know, this happened. But one fellow there, Johnny [PH] Grossman, he was in a Navy uniform. So help me, it wasn't two hours, he stayed there two hours. His mother calls and said get back and go back to your ship. That's how quick they put it into operation. To get them moving. But, that's where I was. I don't mind saying that. We were just nickel and dime, young guys having a few beers on a Sunday afternoon. We had a nice time sure. Good eggs, good guys.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** 17 years old.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** After Pearl Harbor, you obviously in a patriotic mood enlisted. What did you choose for your branch of service?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The U.S. Navy.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Where did you enlist, right there in Deer Park?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** In Cincinnati.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How long did it take for them to take you and put you in basic training?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Two days. Physical the first day, sign the papers, swear in. Next day report up to Great Lakes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Oh, you did your training at Great Lakes.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I did, yes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You took the train up there.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh, yes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was basic training like for the Navy?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** You know, [INDISCERNIBLE], that's rough. I know boots. I never went through boots well. I had my boots out here up in the hills. I'm proud of that. But the Navy basic training is okay. In Great Lakes at that time, they were just building up in Camp Green Bay. They hadn't even completed it yet. We're up there. They didn't even have the hot water heaters in operation. Now you imagine, I joined in November and up there in December trying to take a shower at Camp Green Bay up there. No hot water and we're training out there. Well sure it's cold but I mean taking cold showers every day, hot doggie. It was cold.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Did they ever get the hot water done before you left?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No, they still didn't have it. They were taking their time. They had us in there, we're in training so what the heck.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How long did training last and after your basic training where did they send you?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I received a ten day leave and I reported back to the Great Lakes. Then they sent me out to Balboa Park in San Diego and I went through hospital corpsman school there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How were selected for hospital corpsman school?

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It was a matter of choice.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You chose that.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I thought I would like to be in it, yes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Why did you think you would like to be in that?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I don't know. I always was interested in medicine a bit. I was hoping some day I might really get into it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Be a doctor.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, I was hoping so.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** This was your opportunity.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Sure.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You weren't squeamish about what you would be doing?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No sir. When I got over here was I frightened? You bet. But not then, no I wasn't squeamish.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was training like for a Navy corpsman?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The corpsman training, once you go through boot camp, that's your military training. In corps school it's day after day classroom, the nurses, the chief pharmacist, you go through how to treat the wounds, what to do if you're in a certain position, how to form the triages as they come through. Basically, that was it. It was classroom work. We had no more military. Well once a week on a Saturday we had to stand captain's inspection. But outside of that, it was all classroom work.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How long did that classroom work last?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That lasted I think eight or ten weeks. It was pretty thorough.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Intensive.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Obviously you had an aptitude for this.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** After the training was completed, were you then assigned to the marine division?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How did that all come about?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** This is another story. They came out of [INDISCERNIBLE] you know Naval Bureau Personnel out of Washington. I'm assigned to San Diego down at the recruiting station in the dental section. I'm supposed to go to dental school now to learn how to be a dental technician. No, I didn't go for that at all. I didn't want any part of it. It just wasn't my, I don't know. I didn't like it. A couple of us started goofing off a bit. They told us, they said look, you're goofing off, you know where you're going if you don't stay with it and start passing exams. You're going to the Marine Corps. I said hot dogs. I wanted to go.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Why did you want to go to the Marine Corps?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Because I always had respect for the marines and I knew as a medical corpsman I could do a good job there. That's why and I ended up there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Are you telling me you kind of flunked out of dental school so you could go to the Marine Corps?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Absolutely. 100% intentionally. Three of us did this. In fact, my buddy did, Charlie. He's buried. That's another story. The three of us, we just goofed. So they said okay you guys, get out here and start cleaning. You know the little burs and things in those days. Now they're throw away. But in those days, get out here and set out here, stay out of classes. You're waiting for orders because you're going up on the hill up there to Camp Elliot. You're going to the Marine Corps. We're out there laughing like heck because that's where we wanted to go, all three of us.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** And you made it.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We made it.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How long did it take before they transferred you up to the marines?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Within one week, we were up there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Okay. Then what happened?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Then we went through field medical school. That's the Marines are teaching us now the tactics in the Marine Corps out in the field. Then we had another I think six to eight weeks. We had a buck sergeant. He had 12 years in, just a three stripper. He'd been busted so many times. Hanson, I'll never forget his name. Sweet Hanson.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** He was your drill instructor?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes he was. He was our instructor. He was in charge of us for the entire time. He ran us through. Man, we're out in the boondocks, out in [INDISCERNIBLE] boy and he cussed us out. I'll tell you, that was almost boot camp there. But we didn't get credit for it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Did you learn a new form of language from the sergeant?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh heck yeah. He had a few I didn't know. Yes I did truthfully. But it was great. We loved him. What a great guy.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Now the medical school, what training was that exactly?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Field med. Most of it was fellows who had been out there and they sent them back quickly. They were in Quantum Canal and they sent them back to train us for field work for the medical work out there because it's different.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** They were bringing experienced people in to show you exactly what it was like out there.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. They had first, second class pharmacist mates, chief pharmacist mates. They were showing us the ropes. They said look guys, this is what

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you're going to see out there. Believe me, this is what you're going to see. It's not what you were taught in hospital core school. You're now with the marines.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Did they have photographs of wounds and things like that to prepare you.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh yes, sure. Many. How to treat this one, abdominal wounds wide open. Sure, you become accustomed to it. They even taught us this. They said if it's an abdominal wound, any time the intestines are exposed, if you don't have water, you've got to keep the intestines moist. If they're not moist, it's a matter of minutes. They're going to die. If you don't have the water, my god get some urine. Keep it moist. This is not being please, this is the truth. Keep it moist no matter what you do until we get these boys back there. But if they dry, the nerve endings are gone. Okay, we lose them. That's right, yea.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** A lot of people can't handle that. That's a very difficult thing to be doing. How did [OVERLAPPING]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I don't know. I fell into it. I did. I enjoyed every bit of it. Now, wait a minute, I'm not talking about combat now. I'm talking about order. You bet, I was scared to death when I was here. That's another story. Here, yes, I did enjoy it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You had no problem handling the seriousness of these [OVERLAPPING]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No, we're learning there. We're giving shots, you know, to each other. Treatment, okay here's a casualty coming in here. The triage. With the triage, they build them up in three different sections. They're coming in off the front lines. Okay, these fellas, the doctors determine this, they can't make it, put them over here. They're not going to make it. Just put them over there, get them out of the way. Try to keep them comfortable if you can. Maybe another shot of morphine or

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something. But they're not going to make it. The central part of the triage is the fellas who are badly wounded but they've got a good chance. Treat them now, immediately. Then the third part of it are the fellas coming in maybe with a wound through here. They can wait. So take care of them later. It's set up like this. It's beautiful how they operate. They did a beautiful job.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You as a Navy corpsman then had almost the power of life and death. You had to make those decisions.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. Yes, I made one. I don't know if it was ever right or wrong but that's the other story. That's when we got out here, you still have me back in San Diego.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Well we'll get you out here in a moment.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Okay.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** That seems to me to be very, very tough.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes it is. It makes you judge and jury. It makes you god in some ways. It did, it made me god one time.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Let's move you out of that training. What marine division were you assigned to?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We all boarded in San Diego with a lot of marines out of Camp Elliot at that time. It was a marine base. When we came back, they turned it into a naval base. Yea, Camp Elliot. The big one, Pendleton, that's still there of course. If Pendleton goes, the Marine Corps goes. We went. A lot of marines, a lot of corpsman. We were schooled then and ready to go. We all shipped out up to San Francisco. This was in 1943. We shipped out Christmas Eve of 1943. I remember Christmas day, I've never been so sick in my life. Sea sick.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You'd never been on the big ocean?



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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Heck no. I'm a green fella. We were all green, most of us anyhow. Golly, we were sick. The Liberty ships were stacked four or five tiers high. They had a gunnery sergeant coming down here saying okay, I'm telling you guys we have sub-evacuation drills. When you hear the whistle, when the boat whistle is piping out of here, get out. I'm up on the fifth tier and I was so sick I said I don't care if they shoot me. They had a drill. I didn't go. I did not go. But they couldn't find me up there I'm so dam far up there. Thank God, they didn't see me.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When you say the fifth tier, these are bunks stacked up.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh sure. It's like a hammock almost. But you know to us, that belonged to us. It's our property. We had that and the sea bag and that's all that belonged to you.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Now how many corpsman were assigned that you knew? Did they come out of your class or did you get new corpsman?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh, yes. I think we had about 30 or 40. I was the only third class pharmacist mate at the time so I was in charge of the outfit actually. Except when Hanson would say McCarthy take them out there and drill. I said, sergeant I can't drill these guys. I don't know how. You drill them. Okay I'll drill them, sweet Hanson, the marine. But I couldn't drill them. I had the same rating as he. You know, pharmacist rate third class, just one stripe with the Navy. That's A4. When I came out he's six. I had three before I left there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Were you still 17 or 18 then?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I was 18 then I think, yes, 18 going on 19.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How far at sea did they tell you that you were going to Saipan or did you go to Hawaii first?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They told us at sea we're going to Hawaii. We got to Hawaii. We were not assigned to any. We were assigned to transient center, Honolulu Hawaii, waiting for [OVERLAPPING]

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Oh, I understand, waiting for your assignment.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's right, waiting for assignment.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What did you think of Hawaii?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I loved it. I still love it. It's a little over crowded now.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Not the same as it was in '44.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** In '44 they had, I remember too, one fella told me there was only one hotel on Waikiki.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** There were two.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The Royal Hawaiian was there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** And the Moana Hotel.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's it, the Ala Moana.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** No, the Moana.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh, the Moana. That's on the other street though.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Same side, just further down by the [OVERLAPPING]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Okay. I'll never forget the Royal Hawaiian though. I went back there a few years ago. I told you, I go back every year. The Royal Hawaiian. I told the wife, I said I got to go back because they had a little what we call a slop shoot, you know for the service guys. You sit on this side, you're not permitted to go in there. They had it for us right at the Royal Hawaiian. I think it cost us 35 or 40 cents, which to us was expensive at the time. I told the wife, I've got to go. I said it was right over here. I said I've got to sit down here and have a beer. Well the beer I had a few years ago was \$3.95. But I told her, I said it's worth it. I said I just had to come back here and sit and bring back some nice memories you know.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The Royal looks a lot like it did.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It hasn't changed much.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It hasn't changed.

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No, it has not changed. A new coat of paint but still the same colors.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Did you ever make it down to any of the entertainment facilities in downtown Honolulu?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I sure did. I don't know whether I have it here or not but I still have a five cent. I brought it with me. I want to show it to the guy. A little five cent chip. It said U.S. Navy, The Breakers.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The Breakers.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The Breakers. That was a slop shoot where we stopped then. It was good for five cents. I brought it with me. I still have it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It was good for a beer wasn't it?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It was good for a beer, that's right. Five or ten cents for a beer.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** They had other entertainment down there. Did you ever [OVERLAPPING]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh we had some of the best bands. Oh he was one of the greatest. He played there for quite awhile. I'm trying to think. Well, it'll come back to me.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Of course, they had the women down there. I'm sure you never stopped by any of those places but they had [OVERLAPPING]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No truthfully, I didn't.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The new senator and the cottages.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** This was hotel street.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Right. You'd heard of it but you never visited.

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I heard. I passed it. I've heard of it. I can be honest with you, I don't know, maybe because I'm a Navy Corpsman. I don't know. I was a human being you know, shoot we're all looking for a nice lady. They were lined up for blocks.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** That's what I hear.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Around the corner, around here. I'm asking somebody the first time we went to town, I said what is that. That's the hor house. I said my God, they're all waiting. Then I talked to one guy. He was up there. They had room after room and they go, the woman is here with a towel. The next room a guy is waiting there. Back to the other room. I said, my God, it's not worth it, forget it. I'll drink my beer.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You were in for other entertainment then.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Well, I loved a lady but not that type. No thanks. That, I don't think so. It wasn't worth it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What kind of training were you going through in Hawaii?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Basically, little short order drills in the mornings, but just waiting for transfer.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You didn't do any of the landing training that the marines were going through.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Not at that time. We're still in transient center. Afternoons we had off. At the transient center I made second class. Then I was A5. Then I was able to eat with the staff NCOs with the Marine Corps. Well then the guys hated me for it. They said oh you sob you go over there and eat the good stuff. We have to eat this junk over here. Most of us had the afternoons off. Sometimes you're going through chemical warfare school and do this with a gas mask and if you can get out. A guy said get me out, get me out. I said come on I'll sign you. I had the stripes. I said come on let's go. We went back into the, I remember going through the cane fields. A

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beautiful little lake back there. We all went back there a couple of days and had a swim, then come back later on in the day. We're just out for a good time. Nice guys.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When did you finally get assigned to a division?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I think we were there for, let's see, I told you we left on Christmas Eve. Then we got over, it took a week to get there. I think maybe the first or second week in February we were assigned to the second marine division. We got our orders.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You were on the big island of Hawaii correct?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They took us over to the big island. That's right, up in the Parker Ranch.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Then you trained with that division.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. That was beautiful up there. Right in-between Mona Lu and Mona Kai. You look up there and see the snow. It was something else.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** A lot of people don't realize we have mountains in Hawaii that have snow on them.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's true, yes. And goats, they have hunting and everything else.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** I don't know if you're aware of this, but Parker Ranch is considered the largest cattle ranch in America.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** In the world at one time, it was. They were so nice to us. I wanted to go back. This time I told the wife, maybe I should go back to the big island instead of going over to [INDISCERNIBLE] I told her no, I'm going to need to rest after out here. Let's just forget it for a week until I go back and see Charlie, you know, up in the Punchbowl.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** We'll talk a little. When do you get your orders to go on the invasion?

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Let's see. Let me put this together. June 15, here. We assembled in Pearl. LSTs, we were on the USS Militant. I think it was a coast guard ship if not mistaken. It was a transport. A lot of fellas were on the LSTs, the tank guys were especially. That's where a few of them blew up. They had a rough time those LSTs.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The Westlock explosion, May 21<sup>st</sup> 1944. Did you witness that?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I saw the flames. We were behind it. Somebody said man something happened over there. We just came off a beach party. They took us ashore to drink the warm beer and came back and all of a sudden they said jiminy look at those flames.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Six LSTs were lost.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They lost a lot of good boys there too.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Yes they did.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They didn't get to make it. To me, they were in combat too. They lost a battle, you bet.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Sure. Then you set sail.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We set sail.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How many days were you at sea before they told you where you were going?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Let's see, we went to Quadraline first. We tied in there. I don't know whether to pick up supplies or did something there anyhow. I'm not sure. They told us about I think it was nine days to get out here. I think about half way they called us all together and started

passing out the pamphlets and took us in group by group. You're going to Saipan. Here's the terrain, the topography which shows the mountains.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** They had a map?

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. It was a freeze. They had it built up.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It was one of those relief maps.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's right, a relief map, yes. But built to scale.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Where were you going to land?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I went in D+1. We stayed out overnight in a landing craft. I wished to god I could have landed. I was so sick.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Seasick again right?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** All night. That was the last time I think I ever got sick in my life.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You were no assigned to the second marine division.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I was assigned to the second. E-Medical Company. Second medical battalion, second marine division.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You don't recall what beach you landed on.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, I sure do, right down by Saran Kanua, where the fourth division.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was that beach called?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I think it was Yellow Beach if I'm not mistaken. I think so. Down by the sugar mill.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You come in, D+1.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** D1. We were out there. I remember watching on D-Day and even D-1, the destroyers are back and forth These little rascals. They're after something. I don't know if they hit it on D-night or if they hit it on D-1. They're after. They're shooting back in here towards the air field. We didn't know what they were after then. The cruisers were firing back in there. We saw the explosions but all of a sudden, here it goes. They get that ammo dumped. They'd been looking for that. These little tin cans. These little rascals. They finally hit it. Boy, that thing went a mile high. They got it. They knew it was there and they went after it.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You come ashore and what immediately happens?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** D1.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Did you come ashore during fire?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No. Firing was done. D1, D-Day the firing, they'd moved on up not too far but they were up there. We were right in range at the time. They were still dropping a few mortars here and there but I think the artillery had leveled down a bit to catch the troops coming in, not the beaches then. We landed. We had to wait for our orders as to where we're supposed to go. But coming in, I think that was my first touch of battle and blood.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was that like for you?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Bodies just floating, bobbing like corks. Then it hit me. I was gung ho, I said get me ashore. I want to see what's happening. I saw this and thought oh, oh. This is a taste of what you're going to see from now on buddy. And there were literally hundreds.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Reality kind of set in.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, it set in then. I'm a young punk but I said oh my god.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Eighteen then?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yea, 18, 18 ½. You see them. They're all American boys. They're there. It's before they had a chance to get them out and grave registration, they take them and wrap them in a poncho and give them a temporary burial, take the dog tags and the crosses. I guess that was the baptismal fire right there. Just to see that.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** There have been already corpsman landed before you working already.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh yes, sure. The company aid men. They land with the platoons. They're right up in the front. They're right with them. I became one later. That's another story.



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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You get on the beach. Where do you go from there?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We assembled. They said just relax guys. Take it easy. Have a smoke. We have to wait for orders. You know the doctors are in charge then and the radios back and forth. A state of confusion. Situation normal all fouled up. That's what it was in those days. Another word for it but never mind. We waited I guess maybe several hours. They said okay guys out. Then we

went up to set up our own little medical section, company which we did. It wasn't too far from the beach, around Lake Susupe. It was only temporary. We knew we were getting out later. We did, we set up there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When did you first treat your first casualty?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's a little later. Quite a bit later in fact. There's another little story there. She was not a casualty. I think it was the second day we were there. We had our little almost like a collection section, aid station set up. Some of the prisoners are coming down. Not the military, very few of them surrendered but a lot of [PH] Shemoran people came in and some Japanese came through. One lady came in ready to give birth and just about ready. It was just a matter of hours. We had our jeep ambulance there, just a little hammock more or less. They said McCarthy, go with Hank, he was the driver. Let's go down to the main hospital. They just set that up. They were setting up for emergencies and I guess maybe we had some obstetricians back there. They said get her down there in a hurry. She had a little boy with her about this high. This was one of the nicer parts of it. I think they were Japanese. She was like this. I said don't be afraid. I said [PH]Tobach. She nodded her head. I lit a cigarette and gave it to her. The little boy, miso, water, I put it in a canteen cup and he drank the water. I think I had a little piece of D-ration, black chocolate, the most horrible candy in the world, but he ate it because I guess he was hungry. We took them there and I know she made it. This to me was one of the nicest things. I think

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she was Japanese. We got here there and the Red Cross was trying to check it out for me to see whether or not they could locate whether it was a boy or girl. They said they would write me at home.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Out of all of this death and destruction that was happening on the beach, new life was coming into the world.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's right. How great. Japanese, [PH] Shemoran, American. It didn't matter. It was new life to me. That wasn't a casualty. That was a blessing. I loved that. When we got her there after she had smoked her cigarette, she nods her head like this. She knew she was going to be okay then.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You know Japanese?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh, just a few words.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Did you pick it up here?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I picked a few words, no most of it at home because when we were here 2 ½ years ago, we were here with the Japanese. My buddies, they shot at us, we shot at them but I didn't bring any hatred home with me for 50 years. I left it here. I came back and I met Japanese. Great guys. The same guys came back this time so I studied a little bit and

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Are you talking about veterans that you had met before?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The Japanese veterans, yes. They came back again. [PH] Shiro Shamota, he's on the tape I gave. You'll see Shiro. He was there last night and some of the others. Some of the ladies on the tape, you'll see them also.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It's interesting you have such a forgiving outlook. Some of the marines don't have that outlook. How do you explain that in the sense that you are friends with the former enemy but the others can't do that.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I don't know. Maybe it was being with the medics. Later on you see so much death and that's why I couldn't take it back with me. If they died, we

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died. They're defending their island. They're doing what they're told to do. We're doing what we're told to do. I couldn't take it back with me. I couldn't. I came back this time, I met them. They all loved me, I loved them. That's where I learned a little Japanese because we had a little comedy session each time and [PH] Kosi, the friend who organized these past tours, he married a Japanese lady. She wrote me in Florida. In fact, they visited two years ago. She said will you please learn this tape, a Japanese tape. I started picking that up. This time I had to learn another part of the tape, a different type so I got up there again and we sang. These words, they stick with you. But others, I force myself to learn like decent manners, those are [PH] shiko, a little bow. [PH] Do mata gotto, thank you very much, how are you. Those things I thought that was my responsibility. I want to learn that before I even come back and talk.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How long was it before you got from behind the lines to the front lines?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We moved out of there probably about four or five days. We moved up not too far. A lot of the section stayed back. They were going to set up the hospital. But I went up with one of the aid stations, which is one doctor, maybe half a dozen corpsman. That's when you siphon them through. Treat them as fast as you can and get them back there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Were there any Navy nurses or anything? It was all male at this point?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** At this point there was not female except for the civilians. Now they came in shortly after. Don't get me wrong. They did a beautiful job but this campaign, no, not one female. It was all male.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The casualties starting to come in were tremendous.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They were heavy. Very heavy. They were coming down fast. They were running through jiminy, just like this. But you say the first time, I wasn't with the aid station then. Charlie came through and he gave me his girls picture. He said he just volunteered for the front lines. I said okay Charlie. He said here's my girls picture. He said in case I don't come back will you send it to her. I said don't talk like that. He didn't come back. Two days later Gardner is gone. Right after that, that's when I volunteered. It wasn't in vengeance or anything else but I thought corpsmen were dying like flies out there. They were losing

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** For those of us that don't understand what a corpsman does and what risks there are, why don't you describe to us what a corpsman does on a front-line field battle.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Initially now, on a canal, a corpsman was not even armed. He didn't even have a sidearm. After the canal, they learned.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The [INDISCERNIBLE] Canal we're talking about.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's right. They were wearing Red Cross. They were picking them. They wanted to get that corpsman, we'll get a few more because they can't make it back. Then they issued us weapons. We came in with [SOUNDS LIKE] carbines, not the big ammo but we had the carbines when we came ashore here. We were also considered then one member of the platoon

as a member of the fire power unit. But basically we're there as the corpsman. We're there to treat. A lot of it was not just wounds. A lot of it was dysentery, little scratches here and there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** They become infected.

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Correct. Yes, you take care of that. But then when the big boom starts, then you're moving. You're going as fast as you can to treat them as fast as you can and get them out of there. These are the great guys.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The stretcher bearers.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. These fellas were in peace time bandsmen. Playing the band. The cooks and bakers. There was no time. Those fellas were the stretcher bearers. They did the job, they're coming from the front lines back. The snipers are picking on these poor devils. They're bringing the dead and wounded back. They did a beautiful job. I always shake a hand to the bandsmen and the cook and baker because what a job they didn't come by.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You know, I've never heard anybody mention that. I've interviewed a lot of people. I never hear them mention. You know you see them in the photographs. You have no idea who they are.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's who they are. Basically that's who they are, the bandsmen and the cooks and bakers. Because at the time, they've got to be busy. They're combat. They all went through boots. But basically that's who they were. Now once in awhile I guess they ran out of them, they used someone else. But they were always there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Now a corpsman up on the front-line in a fire-fight, somebody gets wounded, your job is to do what?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Treat them.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You have to crawl up where he is or get somebody to bring him back?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Now this is a lot of discretion they leave. The lieutenant in charge of each platoon, they tell. They told me anyhow and the gunnery sergeant. He said doc we need you up here. He said let me tell you whether to go out or not. Because if they get me, then they have to

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wait for another corpsman to come up and treat. When I was with them, they decided whether or not I should go out there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Whether or not it was safe enough to get out there, risk your life.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's right. What they tried to do was pull off some fire to another angle and go out. But a lot of times, I didn't have to go. They'd send one of their own out there. Hey, they were great guys. Those jarheads. My buddies. That was basically it; you treat them, get them out of there, and do the best you can. Also I didn't want to fire a shot. It wasn't my job. If I had to, I would have. But I never fired a shot.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Tell me the story of Charlie.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Charlie. The word came back just around that time. You know, I told you take care of it. We were best buddies.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was his full name?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Charles Lewis Gardner.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You had gone to school with him?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I went to dental school to begin with. He's one of the guys that crept out.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You'd become good friends.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Sure, we went out on Liberty together, had a few beers. We went through field medical school together. We went on Liberty together.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Where was Charlie from? Do you remember his home town?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Louisville.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Louisville Kentucky.

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. In fact, he had a year and a half at the university of Louisville at the time. He had planned on going back. He was a good drummer too. We went on leave one time on a big island, down to Hilo. The YMCA had something. He said can I go up there and play the drums. They said go ahead. He was good. He gets the applause. That was Charlie. Big, tall, handsome lad.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How old was he?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** When he died he was 19 years old.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Then you said he came back and said I'm going up to the front line and here's a picture of my girl, if I don't make it back

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** See that she gets it. I said Charlie don't talk like that. He didn't make it back. I wrote his folks and told his daddy, I said I have his girls picture. They thanked me so much. I think she was going to Stevens College in Columbia Missouri anyhow. One of the girl's schools. A very beautiful girl.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You wrote the letter home to his family.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I wrote the folks and I wrote one to her. It wasn't easy.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Oh you wrote a letter to his girl.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** After I heard from them. He told me how to reach her and so forth. It wasn't easy but I had to do it and I wanted to do it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When Charlie was killed, did you see him come back?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No. He was over to the right of where we were, a collecting station. He went down to another section but I real quick as soon as I could find out, I said what happened. They said well he was running out. He was a big tall lad, 6'2" I think he was. He was running out there. A machine gun got him. His father asked me how did he die. I said well I know this, a machine gun, he never knew what hit him. Thank god for that. He didn't have to suffer. But no, I did not see him come back.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How did that affect you?

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It hurt. Whew. Now it starts. But let me go. Every tear I leave here I don't have to take back. Thanks. It hurt me bad. Whew. But I went back. I volunteered to go up. Not out of vengeance, no. I didn't hate the Japanese then. But I said well he went up there. I'm going up. That's when I put in my tour of duty up in the front-lines. We went through the next day. That's where I saw them at the Bonsai. We went through there. They said McCarthy. I said yes. I said I want to go up there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Valley of Death.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No, Death Valley, that was the 27<sup>th</sup> Army division. This was Bonsai Valley over here.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Oh okay. Where the big charges came from.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Right up at [SOUNDS LIKE] Quantanabag yea. I went through there the next morning. You could see them just stacked as if someone did it intentionally. But they were just cut down.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The Japanese [OVERLAPPING]

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The Japanese just pile on top of each other.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How many would you estimate? Hundreds?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Hundred thousands. Literally thousands that I went through. You couldn't count them. But thousands did die there. You see the weapons. I still recall this, sure you saw the rifles. These were the Army, the Navy, maybe with the Imperial Marines. But then I saw the sticks with a little knife tied on with a rope, a piece of cord, that was the civilian people who were coming in. They had the orders from the general or the admiral, you know, kill five for the emperor, lose one life, kill five. There were a lot of civilians out there. Many, many of them. I feel so sorry. They didn't know.



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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What about American casualties, were they pretty heavy in there too?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, the 27<sup>th</sup> got hit in there, the artillery. They were firing, I think they had the fuses set down to 2/5 of one second. Just so the shot wouldn't come back and get them from the shells. Just right above them because that's how close they were coming in, the Japanese. Finally they overwhelmed a lot of the response. They killed a lot of boys up there. But they recon, came back and pushed them back and pushed them out to sea. That's when I went up. I was up on a little side of a hill the next day. That's when I guess maybe 100, 200 Japanese, they had moved them out. They had pushed them out on the island. Then every Marine all around there, hundreds of them and the Japanese are out there. They were sitting ducks. They just kept shooting until everyone of them dropped. But I don't know, this is war. What are you going to do?

If we had gone up forward, left them out there that night they're behind us, then we're going to die. These are orders. Follow those orders.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When did you treat your first wound up there?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I think the same day of the bonsai.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Do you remember pretty vividly?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Can you describe it for me?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We were going through, close to the beach. There were a few little caves. Very close. Small caves but there were a lot of them. The Japanese were in there. There was a couple of ammo dumps around there and the shells were dropping. They weren't firing at me or anything. Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to be a hero. A few shells were coming in. The snipers were hitting. They exploded

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one of these little ammo dumps and this boy got it right here in the shoulder. It was a pretty nasty one.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Shrapnel wound.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. He said oh my god. I said stop worrying, you're going home. You're going back to the states. I put a slap on him, a shot of morphine, turned it around so I made sure he's had a shot of morphine. You take the morphine syringe and turn it over so it's right in the front so when he goes back they don't shoot him with too much morphine. If his breathing goes down, it'll kill him. So I just said go on back, you're going back to the states. I know he went back because it was a bad one. That was my first one.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How bad was the wound? Not to be morbid but I want to get kind of an idea of what type of wound you treated.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Well deep enough where the bone was exposed. It was going to take some healing, maybe a bit of rehabilitation. I don't know but it was bad enough I knew he was going back.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You stopped the bleeding obviously, patched him up and got him back down.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Just get him back, yes. That's when the flame-throwers started. Right in that area. That's on the other tape. You can see that. That's another story.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** These people may not see that tape so maybe you ought to tell us that story.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I saw a lot of them. Most Marines saw a heck of a lot more than I did. Don't get me wrong. But I saw enough that the memories are still here. We're going along the little caves, not maybe more than maybe a hundred yards from the beach. They're small caves, maybe only 15-20 feet high up to the next level. Everyone of them they're checking out, [PH] takakoi, come out. [PH] Shipishenada,

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don't be afraid but come out. You know you try to talk to them. If they hear one shot in there, they'll get on the side like this and they still try to help. Maybe if they can they throw a grenade in on the side. But if the grenade doesn't work and they're still firing out, okay, come on out, bring in the flame-thrower. We had all different types. Usually it was just one and sometimes tandem tanks with the flames. That's the fella who was carrying them. Then we had the tanks also, the amphi-tanks carrying the flame-throwers. He goes in that quick on the side. As I said, it's only [INDISCERNIBLE] but you always hear the same thing every time. It sounds like a kitten. Mew, mew, mew and that's it, they're gone. But always that same thing. Time after time, it was always the same thing.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** That was the whimpering of someone dying.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They're dying in there yes. They die so rapidly. They either die of asphyxiation or the heat but they have that much time to give their last sound. That's the last sound you hear out of them.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** That's very haunting.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It was, yes. I took that back. I'm not going to take it this time though. I'm going to leave it here. There were a lot. There's some stories, I don't know. What the heck, I might as well tell them. Let me tell you this thing to begin with, it's all for the Corps. I consider myself a Marine. I always have ever since I left these islands. Anything I say is never ever derogatory towards the U.S. Marine Corps. Please believe me. This happened. This is one

individual doing this. This is not the Marine Corps doing this, but it's one guy. They pulled us back for an hour or two and the two companies are almost merging, platoons anyhow. Frank [PH] Buckner comes down out of the hills. He's looking, where's McCarthy. He was a corpsman also. He left. His daddy was a doctor. He went back and became a good surgeon. But he died. He's

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been dead years now. But he was a good surgeon in Mobile Alabama. He came down and I said Frank how's it going? He said not too good today Dave. I said why what happened. He wasn't crying but he wanted to. He said I just came out of the jungles up here on the hill, just me and the sergeant, a Marine sergeant, three stripper. He said a little boy comes out right behind us. He's crying. He had one arm gone from here. He's bleeding. Frank he jumps out real quick and said let me take care of him. He said I'll get it. He said he came out of here, we can save him. The sergeant said no. He said you leave him here and you go on out and join the rest of the guys. Go join the platoon. He said I had to, what am I going to do. He said ten seconds later I hear a shot. The sergeant comes back. He said what happened. He said I shot him, the boy. Four years old at most is what Frank said. Frank said my god why. He said because 20 years from now he'll be here, have one arm and he'll hate us for it. I said why didn't you shoot him, the son of a bitch. He said I wanted to. I was up on the hill yesterday talking to these guys. I talked to a gunnery sergeant. They're power troopers. They're the toughest in the world. I told him that story and he told him by golly I'd had shot him. I'm talking about the sergeant. But as I'm saying, this is not the Corps, this is one individual who has a twisted mind. He figured 20 years from now it's going to be horrible for this lad to come out with one arm. Is that worth a life for that poor little kid. I said jiminy. Those are some of the stories, my god. Does this include Tinian?

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It can. Sure.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Tinian was another one. This is something I've told some of the Marines and they just, I think I had a few tears on them. We're up in an aid station right behind the lines. It rained on Tinian, oh god it rained. We're all soaking wet but making the most of it. We're back there and going through the [SOUNDS LIKE] cane breaks. Again the Japanese are just dropping the mortars in. They're just firing at random. They can't see us. There were so many of us going

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through there. They got a lot of boys there. One comes back. I didn't tell you about that did I. He came back and the doctor told me McCarthy take care of him. He'd been out there for three days. They found him out in the cane breaks. They brought him back in. It wasn't a leg wound but it was a hip wound, gangrene. How can you amputate a hip? They said he won't make it through the night. McCarthy, you stay with him. Make him as comfortable as you can. That was a sad one. Poor young lad, 17, 18 year old Marine. Crying all night for his mother. Mother, mother, mother. Whew.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When men are wounded was that

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They go back to their, sure

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Is that common?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. It's not uncommon, not by a long shot. Sure, you get some hard noses but most of these marines will tell you, you bet, you go back. The Marine Corps, god love them. They're gung ho rascals. I love every one of them. But they know there is a point where you divide the Marine Corps between the fact that you're going to die. Then it's something else. Without the vision of patriotism and life I guess. I don't know how it works out.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** That happened to you several times.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The other one, yes. They came through again later on, a day or two later. We had to check them through. I was telling you about the triage. We also had to check them out, the dead as they came through in the poncho. Here's where the bandsmen, the cooks, and the bakers were bringing these fellas back. But we had to check through them first, then they're going on back.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You have to check to make sure they're dead.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. We had to log. The doctors had to check and make sure, certify it then send it on back, a little slip of paper, send them back for grave

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registration. Checking them through. Within two hours of one, one of these doctors said wait a minute, there's a mistake here. Something is wrong. He said I have the same last name, I have the same date of birth. Now something is wrong here. But they had two different first names. Twin brothers within two hours of

each other came back dead. Different companies. Different outfits, but they came back within two hours. Those are the things. Can you imagine what their parents, how do you notify them? Two brothers, same day. But it happens.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Can we go back to one thing I'd like to discuss with you. There's a lot not known about Corbin to the general public. When you went in the field, what did you carry with you. For instance, if I was a casualty and you came upon me, you're going to make that assessment which we call assessment today. I don't know what you called it back then. You're going to treat me. What do you have with you to treat me?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** What I had at the time, a bottle of bandages up to this point, the large ones for treating the major wounds, down to the smaller ones for the minor wounds. We had sulfa powder, sulfathalamide, sulfathiazole,

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Explain to me what that was?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** The powder, this is for infection. We had no penicillin. It was not here so this was the best thing we had. Well thank god its all we had but it worked a lot of times. Penicillin would have saved an awful lot of them. We had that. We carried that. We carried the APCs for the headaches, for the fevers.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When you say APCs

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Aspirin, phenacetin and caffeine. APCs. That was the cure all you know, give them an APC. We also carried a little bit, for the diarrhea, they had a lot of diarrhea up in the lines. You did what you could. We'd give them a little yellow powder.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Was that orally taken?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes, with water. A little bit, maybe a quarter teaspoon. They took that with water. It helped a lot of times but sometimes it didn't. Basically, that's what we had in our sacks. When they issued us a machete, a big heavy machete, I said what the heck are we going to do with this. They said you may need it to start, you know if you're treating a leg wound or something, you have broken legs, you might have to cut splints, make the splints. But those dam things were heavy. Every one of us pitched those machetes the first day. They're gone. I don't

know who picked them up. Somebody got a souvenir. We dumped the machetes. That was ridiculous.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** They were not only heavy but I guess they would have gotten in your way a lot.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Always, they're cumbersome. They flip around on your web belt and hitting you like this and this.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You carried all this in a medical bag.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. In a little corpsman bag back here.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Was that a slung type bag?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** You could hook it on or sling it. Most of it we had right here.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How about you? What did you do? Did you sling it?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It depends on where you're going. If you're just going up to join the lines, you might sling it because it's a little easier on you. This bag is very cumbersome. If you are out in the field, you don't want to lose that rascal.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How many pounds would you be carrying there?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh it depends on what you put in there. Some of us carried a lot of extra stuff. I'd say maybe 10-to-12 pounds. We also carried a lot of morphine. Today, they wouldn't permit it because morphine was running around that place like I

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don't know, like Pepsi today. We all carried it. All corpsman carried it Nobody even thought about using it.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What was morphine used for?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Wounds, pain.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** What would it do to a patient?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Eases the pain. It doesn't treat a wound, not one bit. But it eases the pain. There are certain things, head wound, no, don't touch it. Chest wound, don't touch it because it's going to slow down the respiration, you'll kill him. But if it's here, here, or anyplace else, if he's in pain, give him one shot, hang it on here, and send him back.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You must have seen some horrible wounds here.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** They weren't nice. I saw the one, you mentioned this, that's when you play god. This one, I want to close it. Do you mind?

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Sure.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Okay. This is one, this is a Japanese. Don't worry. I never did it on purpose. I was never ever happy with what I did but you're judge, jury and god. They said doc, okay slow down. They brought a Japanese soldier up. He was still blinking his eyes. Naturally his weapon was gone. His entire forehead was gone. Just sheared. It must have been shrapnel. Just laid out the brain. No blood. All I could see was the brain. They said doc, what do you think. It puts you in a spot, is he might going to make it, is he not going to make it. Then this is where you have to put a little bit of military into it I guess because if he doesn't make it, somebody there has to take him back. One of the platoons so we're losing one rifle to take him back. Will he make it, won't he make it. I looked at him again. That haunts me to this day. I shook my head like this. I didn't say a word. They said go on. Ten seconds later I had the same shot like this sergeant that killed the boy. That tore me up. I said here's judge,



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jury and god and to this day, did I do right or not. Had we had penicillin and better medical facilities, I never ever would have thought about it. I don't know. That was a tough one. There were many more. That's enough.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Every year you have a pilgrimage you do. You were telling me about that.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** For Charlie.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Why don't you tell us a little bit about that.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I've gone back for the past five years because his daddy is gone. He has no more family left. I know it's nothing. It's the military cemetery. You've been there I'm sure.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Punchbowl National Cemetery.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Punchbowl, what a beautiful cemetery.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It's in Honolulu.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. They're from all over the Pacific these boys. The boys who were not buried there, their names are up there; MIAs, KIAs, you know, they were blown to bits. They never got back but their names are up there somewhere. What a beautiful place. Yes, I was up

there five years ago. We were coming back I think from Australia. I get there and I say I just wonder if they took Charlie back home or not. His daddy asked me when he first wrote. He said,

what do you think Charles would like, which would he prefer. Would he prefer I bring him home for burial or to stay out there? I wrote him back and I knew Charlie well enough. I said Mr. Gardner, he'd rather be out there. But I was talking about Saipan. So they buried him on Saipan. But years later they transferred them all. Some went home and some went back to there. It dawned on me coming back, I said I've got to check.

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**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Some went to Hawaii.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yes. I checked up there. I said Charles L. Gardner, June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1944. 1034 plot right over here, not far from where Ernie Pyle is buried. Right back there.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** I know exactly where you're talking about.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Beautiful. Anyhow that started I guess my pilgrimage. I've got a nice retirement. I don't have any children. I'm not trying to blow it but I can afford to come back each year. This is the last one. I go to Kauai from here tomorrow.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Oh, Kauai.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Kauai. We spend a week there, come back just for two days to Waikiki because I just want to spend overnight. I told the wife overnight. Then I go to see Charlie on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Come back the next day and then we come back to the states. That's the end of my pilgrimage. I hope I can leave it all behind me then. I'm going to try. Do the best I can.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** All of these veterans that came back, they all come back for different reasons. Why did you come back to Saipan?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I guess, it's a good question. There are probably a lot of answers. Part of it is memories, trying to get rid of them. Maybe I can come back and leave them here. I took too many home. I want to maybe bring them here and leave them here on Saipan. Take the good things back with me and leave the bad ones here. I don't need them anymore. That's one reason. Another I guess is for Charlie. Another is for the guys in the outfit who didn't make it. There was one more sad thing on Tinian that happened. We were on an LSD to land and I loved this boy.

He's another handsome lad from Washington. [PH] McClung was his name. He like me. He was with a different outfit but he always looked me up. Where's McCarthy, where's Mac. He came to

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see me that day. We landed the following morning on Tinian. He was an aid man but he was attached to the company, the platoon so he's right there every time. When they hit, he hits. He came to me and he said how are you doing. I said I'm doing fine Mac, what the heck, we've got another one, we'll make it. He said I hope I can make it. He said look at this, this is the day before now. This is a story, god's honest truth. Mac shows me this, it's a dear John letter from his girl. Well these things happen. That's why I don't have that anymore. The name is gone because that was a dear John.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** It's a tattoo letter.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Yea but the names gone. Sure.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** On this tattoo you told me you had the girls name then you

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It's gone. Coming back I said take that away will you please.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You got a dear John letter.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Sure. Yea. Anyhow he showed it to me. I said Mac hang in. Maybe who know, maybe she isn't worth it if it happens like this. I said, we don't know. You'll know when you get back. But I said there are a lot of good, beautiful, clean girls. He was a clean cut guy. I said don't worry Mac, you'll make it. I said you'll find her. The next day he was killed. I thought lord why couldn't that letter have waited one day you know for him to die before he got it. You know, what do you do.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You just didn't want a man dying of a broken heart.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No. He died. If the letter just could have waited one day, he would never have received it. I said Mac hang in there. Word came back they said McClung is going. I said oh no because I'd read the letter. It wasn't a nasty letter but it was I'm so sorry but I've fallen in love with someone else. I said Mac hang in, you'll meet a better one. He didn't get a chance.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** You know, you went through all this and yet you have a tremendous outlook on life. How do you account for that?

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**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I love life. God has been good to me. He gave me 50 years more than these fellas. I try to live everyday and enjoy it. I came back here. I tell you, what a week its been. I've met people on the streets. I've met them in the restaurants. I've met them in the hotels.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Will you talk about the people that live here locally.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** I am. They take a look at my ID. Were you here 50 years ago. I say yes I was. Let me thank you, shake your hand. I said gees, what does it say all the signs, it said a country, along here as you drive up

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** A grateful nation remembers.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** A grateful nation remembers. I thought how beautiful and how nice. I'll never forget this.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The people of Saipan have treated you very well.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh jiminy, like a king. I went up to, you've probably been there, nice deli if you want a good corn beef sandwich, Bobby Cadillacs, up near the Memorial Park. Get a good hot dog. I went in there yesterday. I said I'll have a sandwich and a beer. I said I'd like to have a Miller Light. She said fine. She said you don't pay for this. She saw this. I said of course I do. She said no you don't. She said my boss said that any of you vets, you don't pay for it. I had a little sandwich. I sat there and had a beer. They brought me another one. Another lady comes over and said thank you so much and she gave me another one. I said that's all. Thank you so kindly. This is all she said, this is on the boss.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** One of our veterans yesterday had mentioned that coming back to Saipan for him, I think it was Mr. [PH] Andre, he said he came back to close a book.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** It's true. I came back for it. In fact I wrote a few words for me when I left home, my little home-town newspaper. He said leave me a few words here

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and he said when you come back, write the grand finale and bring me a few pictures.

I said sure, I don't mind. I said I'm going to leave the nasty stuff over there. So I actually left this for him, a few words about I'm coming over here. This was the caption, closing the book. When I go back, it's going to be the last

chapter. Then when I get to see Charlie, last paragraph, book over, message sent, not closed, end of message, end of book. It is closing the book really.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** How many of your corpsman that you came with were lost here?

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** We lost Charlie in my outfit. We lost [PH] McClung. We lost [PH] Byrd. We lost Brooks. Oh god, I don't know. Dozens out of the companies. We lost a lot of corpsman.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** The corpsman in these stories seem to be the unsung heroes of this action.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** No, I wouldn't say that. If you talk to any marine, ask him about a corpsman. He'll say they're the finest guys in the world.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** When I say that, I say it not out of disrespect, but rather when you read the histories of these actions, their stories are seldom mentioned. They seemed to be so important to the story.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** That's possible. We don't care. We did our job, let's put it that way. I don't care if my name is ever mentioned, just as long as there's a little message left for maybe somebody 20 years down the line. Maybe if you can take a little bit off of this tape and leave it for someone later. You don't need my name. Just leave it for someone else. That's what I'd like to do. Just a few words.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Well this morning you've shared more than a few words and a few thoughts. On behalf of the National Park Service, we'd really like to thank you. I

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know recalling these stories have been painful but they're part of the fabric of history.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Thanks.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Is there anything that

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Oh good heavens, another half an hour, no. That's enough. We'll leave it. Some other guys have something else for you.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Well you've said a lot and on behalf of the Parks Service again thank you very much.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Thank you sir. It's been a pleasure.

**DANIEL MARTINEZ:** Thank you.

**DAVID MCCARTHY:** Thanks. I'll leave it behind me. Thank you.

[END AUDIO]

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